

Consideration for recommendation of approval of amendments to the list of endangered reptiles and amphibians in 312 IAC 9-5-4; 10-170D

The DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife, with a recommendation from the Reptile and Amphibian Technical Advisory Committee, is recommending that the four-toed salamander be removed from the list of endangered species, and that the plains leopard frog and mole salamander be added to the list. The DNR is required to review the list of endangered species every two (2) years and make appropriate amendments under IC 14-22-34-11.

Extensive research has been conducted on the four-toed salamander over the past five years in Indiana to determine its population in this state. Seven new county records were found, and older records were verified and/or reconfirmed, with a population found in at least twenty Indiana counties. This salamander lives along forested areas near springs, seeps, woodland ephemeral wetlands, and bogs. They can also be found in moist areas under leaf litter, logs, and moss in the spring and summer. Their distribution is scattered throughout the state but appears to be stable, and the DNR is recommending that it no longer be listed as an endangered species.

The mole salamander is proposed to be added to the list. It was only recently discovered in Indiana and is known only to exist in a single population in one county. They typically inhabit floodplain forests located near gum and cypress swamps. Because of its isolated, small geographic range in Indiana, narrow habitat tolerance, and small population size, the DNR is requesting that it be listed as an endangered species. Several other states also consider this species to be imperiled or vulnerable due to the draining of wetlands and clearing of floodplain forests.

The plains leopard frog is also proposed to be added to the list as a result of new population information and habitat loss. Recent surveys in Indiana have not found the plain's leopard frog, even in areas where they were found in the past 10 years. Furthermore, some locations where they were found in the past have been converted to agriculture and no longer provide habitat suitable for this species. This salamander needs prairie, savannah, and grasslands to live and breeds in marshes and ponds. With few actual records now known in Indiana and its limited distribution, the DNR is also requesting that it be listed as an endangered species.

TITLE 312 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Proposed Rule LSA Document #10-

DIGEST

Amends 312 IAC 9-5-4 to remove the four-toed salamander and add the plains leopard frog and mole salamander to the list of endangered species of reptiles and amphibians. Effective thirty (30) days after filing with the Publisher.

312 IAC 9-5-4

SECTION 1. 312 IAC 9-5-4 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

312 IAC 9-5-4 Endangered species of reptiles and amphibians

Authority: IC 14-10-2-4; IC 14-22-2-6; IC 14-22-34-17

Affected: IC 14-22-34-12

Sec. 4. The following species of reptiles and amphibians are endangered and are subject to the protections provided under IC 14-22-34-12:

- (1) Hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*).
- (2) Red salamander (*Pseudotriton ruber*).
- (3) ~~Four-toed salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*).~~
- (4) Green salamander (*Aneides aeneus*).
- (5) (4) Copper-bellied watersnake (*Nerodia erythrogaster neglecta*).
- (6) (5) Butler's gartersnake (*Thamnophis butleri*).
- (7) (6) Kirtland's snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*).
- (8) (7) Scarletsnake (*Cemophora coccinea*).
- (9) (8) Smooth greensnake (*Opheodrys vernalis*).
- (10) (9) Southeastern crowned snake (*Tantilla coronata*).
- (11) (10) Cottonmouth (*Agkistrodon piscivorus*).
- (12) (11) Massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus*).
- (13) (12) Timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*).
- (14) (13) Eastern mud turtle (*Kinosternon subrubrum*).
- (15) (14) Spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*).
- (16) (15) River cooter (*Pseudemys concinna*).
- (17) (16) Alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*).
- (18) (17) Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*).
- (19) (18) Crawfish frog (*Lithobates areolatus*).
- (20) (19) Ornate box turtle (*Terrapene ornata*).
- (20) **Plains leopard frog (*Lithobates blairi*).**
- (21) **Mole salamander (*Ambystoma talpoideum*).**

(Natural Resources Commission; 312 IAC 9-5-4; filed May 12, 1997, 10:00 a.m.: 20 IR 2713; filed May 16, 2002, 12:25 p.m.: 25IR 3047; readopted filed Jul 28, 2003, 12:00 p.m.: 27 IR 286; filed Sep 23, 2004, 3:00 p.m.: 28 IR 542; filed May 25, 2005, 10:15 a.m.: 28 IR 2947; filed Jan 8, 2007, 9:11 a.m.: 20070207-IR-312060193FRA; filed Jun 29, 2007, 2:30 p.m.: 20070725-IR-312060272FRA; readopted filed Nov 24, 2008, 11:08 a.m.: 20081210-IR-312080672RFA; filed Jul 6, 2010, 1:55 p.m.: 20100804-IR-312090616FRA)